

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology
and Immunization Section**

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Health Advisory: Protests, Large Group Gatherings & COVID-19, King County – 9 June 2020

Actions requested:

- **Be aware that large group gatherings including protests beginning last weekend in Seattle and ongoing may increase the spread of COVID-19.**
- **Educate potential participants that attending a large gathering with prolonged close contact carries a risk of acquiring COVID-19 and bringing it back to their homes, workplaces and communities.**
- **Healthcare providers should ask about exposures to large group gatherings and test for COVID-19 in patients so exposed and with compatible symptoms including fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and, diarrhea.**
- **Participants should monitor their health for COVID-19 symptoms in the 14 days after attending any large group gathering and seek testing promptly if symptoms develop, even if mild.**
- **It is important to counsel patients that a negative test does not exclude COVID-19 unless the 14-day incubation period is past.**
- **Clinicians should have a low threshold for testing persons participating in large group gatherings and use clinical judgement regarding testing of asymptomatic persons.**
- **Encourage protesters to take steps to minimize risk and seek testing if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19. Steps to prevent potential COVID-19 risk for participants include:**
 - **Stay home if you have symptoms**
 - **Maintain 6 feet separation from others**
 - **Wear a cloth face mask**
 - **Use hand sanitizer frequently**
 - **Use noisemakers instead of shouting.**

Background: Protest gatherings have been occurring in Seattle since May 30th and additional protests are planned. The City of Seattle is encouraging all protesters to be tested. Public Health and WA State Department of Health are not requesting all protesters be tested, but clinicians should have a low threshold for testing in this group and use clinical judgement regarding testing of asymptomatic persons.

Testing locations in King County can be found at: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/care/testing.aspx>